

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DOHA 00441 041234Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 HEW-04
TRSE-00 FEAE-00 OMB-01 /086 W
-----041302Z 050964 /44

R 041150Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY DOHA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2492
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ENRG, QA
SUBJECT: EXTENSIVE FIRE DAMAGE TO GOVT OF QATAR NGL INSTALLATION

1. A SENIOR OFFICIAL OF GOVT OF QATAR PETROLEUM PRODUCING AUTHORITY (QPPA) ADVISED US THAT A SERIES OF FIRES AND EXPLOSIONS RAGED THROUGH THE QPPA NATURAL GAS LIQUIDS (NGL) INSTALLATION AT UMM SAID THE EVENING OF APRIL 3 AND MORNING OF APRIL 4. ON THE BASIS OF PRELIMINARY INFORMATION QPPA OFFICIALS DESCRIBED DAMAGE AS EXTENSIVE AND ESTIMATED THAT THE INSTALLATION WILL BE OUT OF OPERATION FOR AT LEAST ONE YEAR, AND POSSIBLY TWO YEARS. THREE EMPLOYEES WERE KILLED AND APPROXIMATELY ONE DOZEN EMPLOYEES WERE INJURED. CAUSE OF THE FIRE REMAINS UNKNOWN.

2. THE FIRE-EXPLOSIONS BEGAN APPROXIMATELY 1800 HOURS LOCAL
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APRIL 3. BY STOPPING PRODUCTION IN DUKHAN AND TURNING OFF THE GAS LINE, QPPA WAS ABLE TO STOP FEEDING THE FIRE WHICH IS KNOWN TO HAVE DESTROYED AT LEAST TWO HOLDING TANKS AND THE CONTROL ROOM IN WHICH THE THREE EMPLOYEES DIED. FIRE EQUIPMENT FROM DOHA AIRPORT WAS CALLED TO ASSIST IN FIGHTING THE FIRE. AS OF 1400 HOURS LOCAL APRIL 4, THE FIRE HAD BEEN CONTAINED BUT WAS STILL BURNING.

3. QPPA AUTHORITIES ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE INSTITUTED A FREEZE
ON NEWS OF THE FIRE PENDING RECEIPT OF MORE INFORMATION.

4. GOQ MINISTER OF FINANCE AND PETROLEUM SHAYKH ABDUL AZIZ
BIN KHALIFA AL THANI TOLD VISITING AMB MAESTRONE AND AMBASSADOR
DURING CONVERSATION MORNING APRIL 4 THAT IT TOO EARLY TO DETER-
MINE CAUSE OF FIRE OR EXTENT OF DAMAGE TO NGL PLANT. HE NOTED
SAFETY PROCEDURES HAD LEFT SOMETHING TO BE DESIRED. ACCORDING
ABDUL AZIZ, THERE HAD BEEN 17 CASUALTIES, OF WHICH SIX
FATALITIES AND THAT VICTIMS WERE BOTH QATARIS AND EXPATRIATES--
HE OBSERVED FIGURE WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH HIGHER HAD ACCIDENT
OCCURRED WHEN FULL WORK FORCE OF SEVERAL HUNDRED WAS ON JOB
DURING REGULAR DAY SHIFT.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: LPG, PETROLEUM INDUSTRY, FIRES, INDUSTRIAL PLANTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 04-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
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Litigation History:
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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TAGS: ENRG, QA
To: STATE
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Review Markings:
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